



East Street – high street engagement and plans

Area overview

East Street in Bedminster is located a few miles to the south of Bristol city centre. It is an historic high street with a wide selection of retail outlets alongside hospitality, creative units and a library, creating a popular hub for the local community.

Predominately a retail street and mainly pedestrianised, East Street is served by several bus routes and it has a local railway station nearby. Within a few minutes' walk there are many industrial units, offices and a popular city farm.

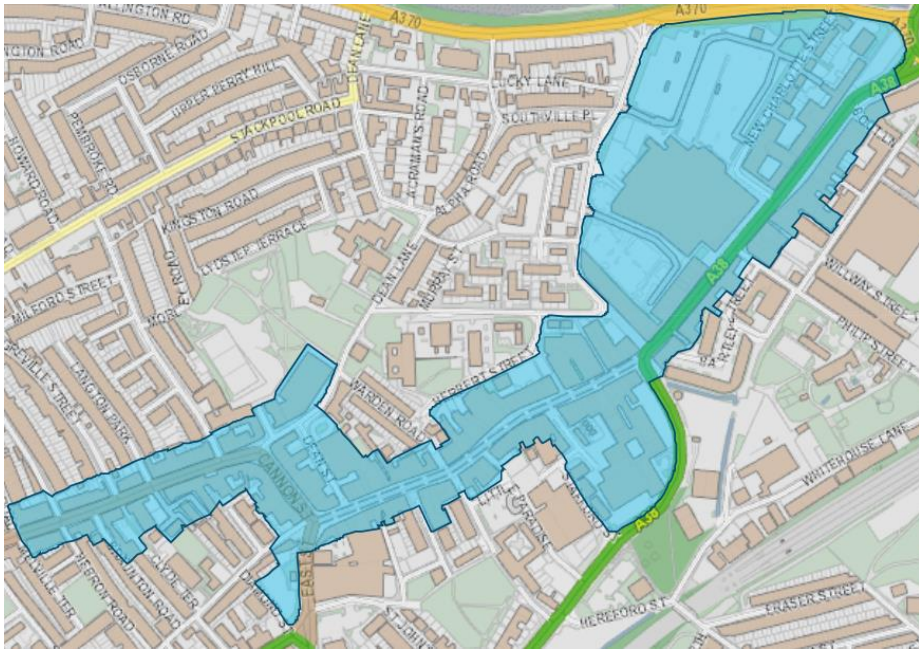
East Street is one of the few high streets that still has a stand-alone Post Office and as well as branches of major national chains.

New establishments have opened over the last few years keeping it in touch with a changing demographic. However, there is a feeling that East Street is tired and there are a noticeable number of vacant units.

Over the next few years there is a large amount of development planned for the surrounding area which will offer both challenges and opportunities for the high street.

During 2020/21 extensive consultation was undertaken to develop a vision for East Street to improve public spaces and development in the adjacent Bedminster Green area (around St Catherine's Place and Dalby Avenue/Malago Road) is being guided by a regeneration framework.

The Council is committed to working with local people through the Bedminster Business Improvement District (BID) and other community organisations.



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Engagement Feedback

We engaged with businesses and residents in September to November 2021 to identify the major issues in the area and again in January and February 2022 to gather more detailed information and ideas about the priorities identified. This was done through a combination of on-line focus groups, an on-line survey with a paper alternative and on-street engagement.

Half of the businesses surveyed recorded a decrease in footfall over the past 12 months although just over half anticipate a rise in footfall over the coming year. They also highlighted their general dissatisfaction with East Street, with litter, recycling and anti-social behaviour being the biggest issues mentioned.

Two thirds of businesses and over 60% of residents would like to see a wider range of shops and services added to the high street.

Most people come to East Street to shop at least once a week and around 70% do so on foot. The time spent there was usually around an hour, perhaps reflecting the number and range of shops and services available. Reasons given for not going to the high street included it being run down and neglected, feeling unsafe and the level of anti-social behaviour, with street drinkers being a particular concern.

82% were dissatisfied with the street's appearance. More than one person commented on the general dirtiness of the street and suggested that the first priority should be a thorough cleaning. Litter is an issue, but mostly in terms of general litter, including cigarette butts, and some fly-tipping in side streets.

The most popular options for improving the streetscape related to greenery and general cleanliness. The preference was for more trees and there was a general trend towards low-maintenance planting.

In terms of events, both residents and businesses would like to see markets followed by community events (fetes, parades, etc.). Suggestions included trying to link up with the successful market at the Tobacco Factory and generally improving links with North Street.

Other responses included complaints about anti-social behaviour such as street drinkers and graffiti, with suggestions to install CCTV and increase the police presence, pedestrianisation of the area, better variety of shops and investment in the vacant units. A variety of additional shops and services were suggested which included, but not limited to, a community meeting space, bank, pharmacy and more independent shops.

People are proud of East Street's identity as a major longstanding high street and would like to see it brought back to its former glory. There is a sense of community and unity and a desire for cohesion between old and new. People want to ensure events, installations and services are tailored for the area,

especially with consideration given to the new housing developments that are due to be built and also taking account of the needs of all age groups. The area could benefit from money being spent on the infrastructure to support events and activities, such as electrical points for outdoor events.

High street plans

Issues and Opportunities	Proposed Action
Need to support businesses and organisations	Business Development Officers to provide information, signposting and support
	Provide information to businesses on how to improve the appearance of their windows/frontages
	Promote the area and its offer using a variety of channels, including www.wheresittobristol.com and @shoplocalbris social channels including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
Attracting new and desirable shops and services to the vacant property units	Monitor property vacancies to identify opportunities and promote the vacant property grant scheme to potential occupiers
Ensure public realm improvements contribute to the long-term vision for East St (East St Public Realm Masterplan), including additional greenery	Identify appropriate greenery and specific locations for placement and initial designs produced
	Work with organisations/local residents to develop a group for maintenance of greenery/plants
	Install new greenery/plants
Provision of infrastructure for events would facilitate event organisation	Investigate feasibility of installing such infrastructure, e.g., external power sources
Litter and fly tipping is an issue	Identify source of fly-tipping
	Install additional litter/recycling bins
	Focused public education campaign around litter/recycling/dog fouling, working with Bristol Waste and enforcement teams
Pavements are dirty	Investigate feasibility of more regular cleansing (jet washing and some additional cleansing was carried out in April 2022)
Desire for more community events/projects to bring people together and increase footfall to local traders	Commission/grant fund organisations to deliver community events
Interest in a regular mixed market	Explore options for delivery of a market
Public art strategy being developed as part of Bedminster Green development to be focused on East Street	Liaise with public art consultant in developing coordinated strategy
Issues with closure of Malago Road north bound to traffic	Improve signposting and communications (billboards, leaflet drops and communication campaigns were delivered during April/May 2022)

Ongoing anti-social behaviour will continue to deter people from visiting the high street

Address anti-social behaviour with internal stakeholders and local police